An Overview Of The ATKIN'S Diet

ShipShape Telecon

June 25 2003

Presented by:

CDR Martie Slaughter, MS, RD

Excerpts taken from Zonya Foco’s presentation at the Maryland Dietetic Association Annual Meeting

Introduction

- Objectives:
- After this presentation participants will understand the mechanics of the Atkins' diet
- Be able to explain the shortcomings of the Atkins' diet

Agenda

- Potential advantages of the diet
- Potential problems with diet
- Suggested questions to curb a curious client.
- Discuss the results of recent research

Overview of the Atkins' Diet

- Extreme deprivation of CHO (20 – 90 grams) minimum intake for brain function is 130
- Unlimited amounts of meats/fish/poultry
- 1st 3 days consumption is in excess of 3000 kcals (overeating is masked by water loss)
- After novelty wears off intake averages 1,200 – 1,700 kcals

Overview Continued

- Ketosis occurs in CHO deprivation
- Body begins breaking down own tissue including fat, for energy
- Appetite is depressed
- Weight loss is still dependent on calories in versus those expended

Potential Advantages of Diet

- Elimination of simple sugars
- Drastic drop in circulating glucose and/or insulin for those with DM and/or glucose intolerance
- Positive awareness of empty calorie, high sugar foods and glutton-sized portions of pasta, potatoes
- Awareness often escapes those on low fat diets

Potential problems

- ↑ risk of heart disease
- Low in folate and numerous antioxidants and protective phytochemicals
- ↑ Cancer risk due to constipation (diet averages less than 6 grams of fiber)
- ↑ Osteoporosis due to high Ca^{++} excretion and low Ca^{++} intake unless at least 2 oz of cheese is included

Potential Problems Continued

- ↑ Gout due to ↑ blood uric acid
- ↑ Kidney stones due to ↑ uric acid and calcium oxalates formation
- ↑ Orthostatic hypotension induced fainting due to electrolyte lost resulting in dehydration
- Likelihood of rising blood pressure with age due to low intakes of K^{+}, Mg^{++} and phosphorus

Suggested Questions to ask

- If you were allowed to eat all the butter you wanted and no bread, how much would you eat?
- Knowing that the Atkins' “ketogenic effect is only 45 calories per day, is it still worth the extreme diet?
- Do you realize that when you lose 15 pounds in 4 weeks on the diet after adjusting for water loss only 8 lbs are lost?

Results of recent Atkins' study vs. low fat, low CHO diet

- Lbs dropped more quickly on Atkins at 3-6 mths mark
- Differences in weight loss were not significant at 12 mnth mark
- No significant differences in total CHOL and LDL CHOl
- ↑ in HDL and ↓ triglycerides in Atkins diet

Results of Atkins' versus Low fat, High CHO diets

- Adherence was low and attrition high in both groups
- Longer, larger studies are required to determine long term safety of Atkins' diet

Other findings

- No magic cures for weight loss
- Losing weight takes commitment
- Calories count
- Smart choices are required
- Lower CHOs safely
- The final chapter is still being written

Questions?